Application No: 10/539,839
Amendment B
Reply to Office Action Dated 01/09/2008   Attorney Docket No: 3926.163

IN THE CLAIMS:

The following listing of claims replaces any earlier listing:

1. (currently amended) A method for detecting surroundings by means of an automotive night vision system of a vehicle having a high beam headlight illuminating a high beam area and a low beam headlight illuminating a low beam area, the method comprising:

~~dividing the area covered by the system into several areas, including~~

providing a detection area, ~~wherein~~ in which the night vision system is sensitive at least to optical radiation in the IR wavelength region and detects data relating to the surroundings, ~~and~~

providing an area of representation, ~~wherein information from the data relating to the surroundings detected by the night vision system is represented optically to the driver by means of a display device~~ that does not cover the entire detection area, ~~restricting~~ wherein the area of representation is restricted to comprise at most the high beam area of the vehicle, and

displaying to a driver of the vehicle only information from date relating to the surroundings detected by the night vision system in the area of representation.

2. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

providing an evaluation area within which the data relating to the surroundings detected by means of the night vision system are subjected to evaluation.

3. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

providing the area of representation with a tolerance area.

4. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the area of

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representation comprises at least a part of the low beam area.

5.   (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the evaluation area comprises at least the high beam area.

6.   (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 2, wherein objects detected by means of the evaluation in the area of representation are emphasized in the optical representation.

7.   (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 6, wherein the information relating to the objects detected during the evaluation in the evaluation area is made available to internal vehicle systems for further evaluation.

8.   (previously presented) The method as in claim 2, wherein said evaluation is object recognition.

9.   (previously presented) The method as in claim 8, wherein the evaluation area is automatically expanded when an object recognized is located only partially in the evaluation area until the object has been completely evaluated.

10.   (previously presented) The method as in claim 2, wherein the evaluation area includes the entire detection area of the night vision system.

11.   (previously presented) The method as in claim 8, wherein objects located directly in front of the vehicle are not recognized.

12.   (previously presented) The method as in claim 3, wherein the tolerance area is permanently prescribed.

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13. (previously presented) The method as in claim 3, wherein the tolerance area is automatically controlled on the basis of vehicle variables or variables of the surroundings.

14. (previously presented) The method as in claim 10, wherein the tolerance area is set as a function of an evaluation of data relating to the surroundings.

15. (previously presented) The method as in claim 11, wherein the tolerance area is automatically expanded whenever an object is situated only partially in the current area of representation in such a way that the object is covered completely by the expanded area of representation.

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